



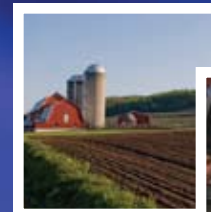
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**Mark Messmer**

200 W. WASHINGTON STREET • INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204

## 2009 Legislative Wrap-Up

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REPRESENTATIVES



# 2009 Legislative Wrap-Up



What important issues are facing our community today, in your opinion?

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# Taxpayers are Winners in New State Budget

I believe the new state budget, based on solid common-sense principles, is a success for Hoosier taxpayers.

The budget is a bipartisan compromise, receiving support from Democrats and Republicans alike. Sound fiscal principles and practical solutions remained an important influence.

*The budget is a bipartisan compromise, receiving support from Democrats and Republicans alike. Sound fiscal principles remained an important influence. It is a success, I believe, because:*

- No general tax increases.
- Maintains at least \$1 billion in state reserves.
- Uses one-time federal stimulus money responsibly, including statewide infrastructure and university construction projects.
- It does not deplete trust funds or other dedicated money for operating expenses.

My colleagues and I outlined those standards early in the process and did not waver. While many states are cutting overall education spending, raising taxes or both, this budget does neither. It even promises more support for education through additional funding.

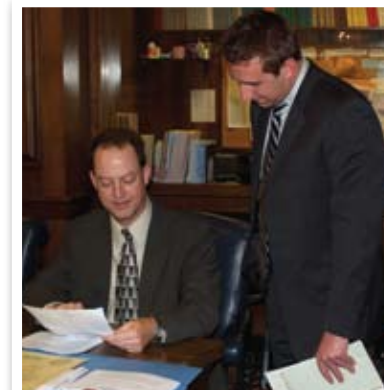
*Statewide public education receives what I believe is solid support:*

- K-12 education gained an average increase of 1.1 percent in calendar year 2010 and 0.3 percent in calendar year 2011.
- The budget funds K-12 anticipated enrollment increases at growing public schools.
- The state's higher education scholarship grants program receives increases of 6 percent in fiscal year 2010 and 3 percent in fiscal year 2011.

I believe this budget is the best we can do for Indiana right now, given the economic turmoil we are presently in; that's why I voted for it.



Rep. Messmer looking through bills.



Rep. Messmer working with a staffer.

## Tuition exemption for Purple Heart recipients

This legislation honors Hoosier heroes who have sacrificed so much for us. Senate Enrolled Act 39 grants all Hoosier Purple Heart recipients free tuition to state colleges and universities. Previous law provided tuition to those who received the Purple Heart after Sept. 10, 2001, and the children of all Purple Heart recipients.

## School dropout prevention

The new Dropout Prevention Fund will provide money for school corporation programs to identify students who are at risk of dropping out of school and to provide appropriate interventions for those students. My goal is to expand curriculum choices to meet the needs of more students as a means of keeping them in school.

## Qualified immunity for teachers

House Enrolled Act 1462 grants teachers qualified immunity for reasonable acts of discipline. This legislation removes a worry that prevents teachers from disciplining misbehaving students, allowing them to maintain a safer environment for learning. The legislation also:

- Adds possession of child pornography to the

list of felonies for which teachers may lose their licenses.

- Requires a school corporation, a charter school, and accredited nonpublic schools to conduct an expanded criminal history background check before employing a potential employee in any position within the school corporation.

## Growing high-tech jobs

I supported tax incentives to help knowledge-based information technology companies invest in equipment and real estate. This should make it easier for companies to invest in Indiana and themselves, leading to more high-paying jobs across the state.

## Youth Shelters

This legislation gives emergency shelters or homeless shelters the authority to serve runaway or unattached children. This law also provides protection against civil liability and frivolous lawsuits for shelter workers who care for homeless and runaway youths.



# Mark Messmer

State Representative • House District 63

Important Contact  
Information for  
Representative  
Mark Messmer

Statehouse Office:  
1-800-382-9841  
232-9793

E-mail Address:  
[h63@iga.in.gov](mailto:h63@iga.in.gov)

Web site:  
[www.in.gov/h63](http://www.in.gov/h63)

Mailing Address:  
200 W.  
Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN  
46204